MARVEL

DAREDEVIL · LUKE CAGE · JESSICA JONES · IRON FIST

#5

BENDIS
MARQUEZ
PONSOR

THE DEFENDERS™

THE DEFENDERS

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DANNY RAND, THE IRON FIST.
OWY!
REALLY.
"OWY"? MAN UP, FIST.
I SWEAR TO GOD, I THINK DIAMONDBACK BROKE HIS BACK TONIGHT.
ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, "OWY" IS PRETTY BADASS.
LINDA CARTER, THE NIGHT NURSE.
OH, DUDE. YA BROKE?
NOT, OW, BROKEN.
MY BODY IS, AGH, A TEMPLE.
WELL, YOUR TEMPLE IS BROKE, SON.
LINDA, NIGHT NURSE, THANK YOU.
I KNOW I'M WHAT MY OLD SENSEI USED TO REFER TO AS A "HUGE KVETCH," BUT YOU ARE, AS ALWAYS, AN UNBELIEVABLE HELP TO US.
IF THERE IS EVER ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU--
GET THEM TO LOWER MY RENT.
WAIT, YES, HOLD ON...DID I NOT BUY YOU THIS BUILDING?
WHAT?
THIS BUILDING. DID I BUY IT FOR YOU?
OF COURSE NOT.
OH, WELL, IT'S YOURS.

A WHILE AGO, RIGHT, A WHILE AGO I TOLD LUKE I WANTED TO DO SOMETHING FOR YOU.
SOMETHING. A KINDNESS.
DURING THE WHOLE OSBORN THING.
YES.
I THOUGHT I'D BUY YOU A BUILDING OR A CAR OR SOMETHING.
LIKE AN AMBULANCE.
AND FOR THE LIFE OF ME I COULD NOT REMEMBER IF I HAD.
LIKE WITH A BADASS NIGHT NURSE LOGO ON THE SIDE.
YOU KNOW I CAN'T ACCEPT--
YOU DO SO MUCH FOR ALL OF US--
--AND YOU NEVER EVEN LET US PAY FOR SUPPLIES.
THIS IS IT!
IT'S DONE.
THIS IS A TOO MUCH, MR. RAND.
I'M DOING IT.
NO. IT'S TOO--
IT'S NOT. IT'S A BUILDING.
THE UNIVERSE IS VAST.
THIS IS A SMALL TOKEN OF MY--OF ALL OF OUR APPRECIATION.
OUR KIND...
...WE NEED YOU.
WE BASICALLY LIVE HERE.
WORD.
WE NEED YOU. SOMEONE WITH A BAND-AID AND AN UNDERSTANDING EYE.
AND IN RETURN, LET'S SAY YOU STITCH US UP WHENEVER WE NEED A STITCH-UP.
SO, BASICALLY, THE SAME AS YOU DO NOW.
THANK YOU, MR. RAND.
NO, NO. THIS BRINGS ME A LOT OF JOY.
THANK YOU.
DIAMONDBACK HAS ESCAPED.

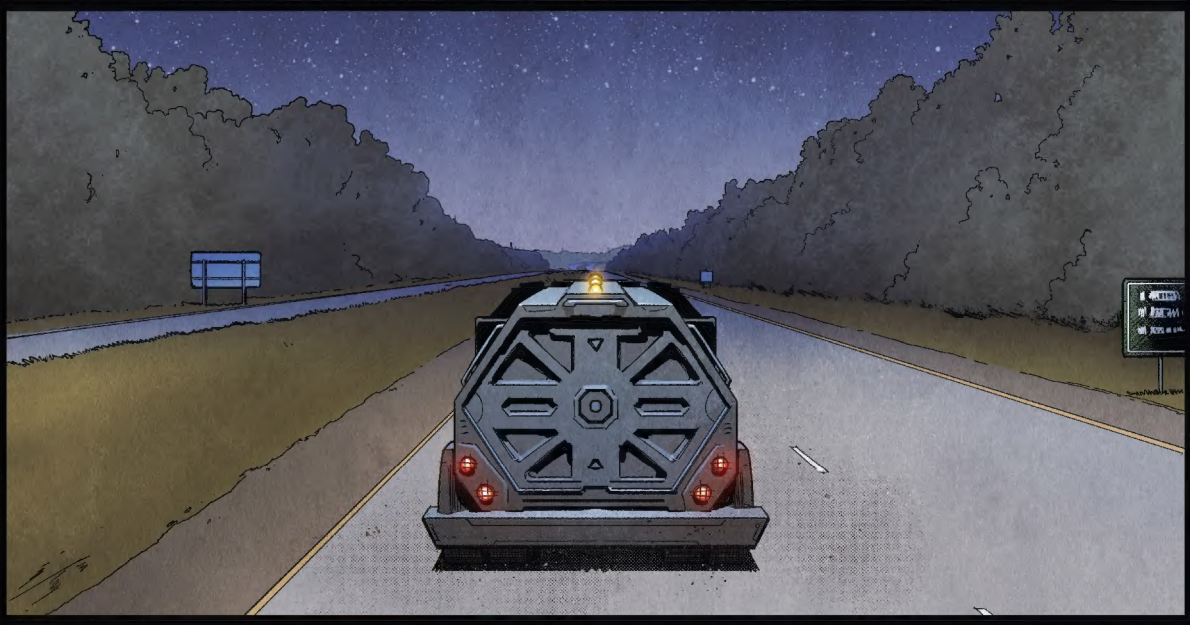
WHAT?
DAREDEVIL, WHAT HAPPENED?
I'M HEARING IT ON THE POLICE SCANNERS NOW.
IT SEEMS...
WILLIS STRYKER, A.K.A. DIAMONDBACK.
HE'S BEING TRANSFERRED BEFORE PROCESSING?
THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY SAYS HE IS TOO HIGH-RISK TO BE HELD IN COUNTY LOCKUP.
PLUS, HE FAKED HIS OWN DEATH, SO THE PAPERWORK ON THIS IS GOING TO BE INSANE.
YOU'RE LUCKY, STRYKER-- WE HAD AN EMERGENCY TRANSFER ALREADY HAPPENING.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT THREE HOURS FOR THE NEXT ONE.
THEY PUT HIM IN THE SAME VAN AS THE PUNISHER? ARE YOU KIDDIN' ME?
ARE YOU KIDDIN' ME?!
(CHEAP-ASS--)
HOLD ON, I WANT TO HEAR WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.
OH, I KNOW WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.
MY MAN WILLIS OPENED HIS MOUTH.
MY MAN, FRANK CASTLE.

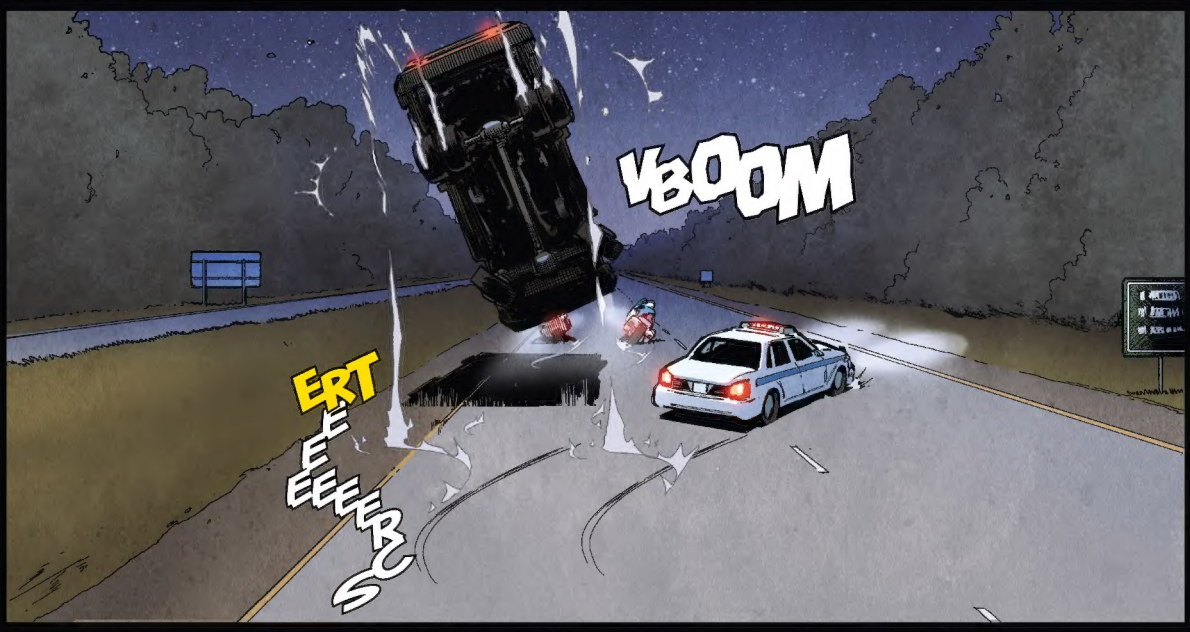
"THE ALMIGHTY PUNISHER."
"SCOURGE OF THE UNDERWORLD."
I HEARD YOU WERE OUT THERE LOOKING FOR ME.
SO THIS IS, WHAT? FORTUITOUS?
SO, WE GOT A COUPLE OF MINUTES...
...WHAT DID YOU WANT TO ASK ME?
HA!
HEH HEH...
WHO'S BACKING YOU?

BACKING ME?
WHY DOES THERE GOTTA BE SOMEONE BACKING ME?
A BROTHER CAN'T STAKE A CLAIM FOR HIMSELF?
NO ONE ASKED THE KINGPIN IF HE HAD A BACKER.
HE DID. NOW-DECEASED CRIME LORD DON RIGOLETTO.
YOU USED TO WORK FOR HIS MAGGIA COMPETITOR, SONNY CAPUTO. AROUND THE SAME TIME.
WOW.
WELL, THIS MAGNIFICENT MAN IS SELF-MADE.
STOP INSULTING ME WITH THIS.
WHAT YOU'D NEED TO FUND WHAT YOU'RE DOING TO THIS CITY...
YOU KNOW, FRANK...
...IT'S HARD NOT TO BE INSULTED BY THIS LINE OF INQUIRY.
YOU'RE SMALL-TIME.

YOU KNOW, THERE WAS ALWAYS SOMETHING I WONDERED ABOUT YOU...
...AFTER YOUR WIFE AND KIDS GOT MURDERED BECAUSE YOU WERE TOO MUCH OF A @#$@ TO GET WITH THE PROGRAM?
LIKE LITERALLY EVERYONE ELSE ON THE PLANET EARTH.
AFTER YOU SAW YOUR WIFE'S BLOODY CORPSE...
I DON'T KNOW, MAYBE EVEN STARING BACK UP AT YOU WITH THOSE BIG CONFUSED DEAD EYES...
"WHY? WHY, FRANK?"
"WHY AM I NOW DEAD AND BROKE? IF YOU'D BEEN A DECENT PROVIDER WE COULD HAVE HAD A BOAT AND BEEN ON IT RIGHT NOW, BUT NO... I'M DEAD."
MY QUESTION IS--AFTER YOU SAW HER DEAD, BLOODY FACE STARING BACK UP AT YOU BLAMING YOU FOR WHAT YOU'D DONE TO HER...
...HOW LONG WAS IT AFTER THAT, THAT...YOU KNOW...
...YOU DID THE DEED?
WAS IT RIGHT AWAY?
IT WAS, WASN'T IT?

POLICE
POLICE

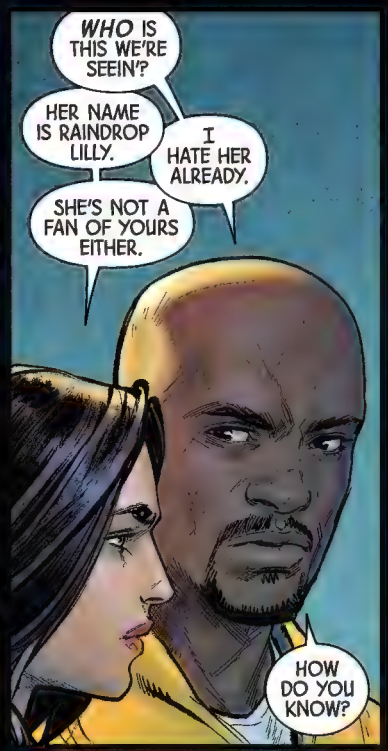



VBOOM
ERT
E
E
EEEEEBC
S

AGH!
HIT MY NOSHH AGAIN!
@#$@#$@#!
FUMMPP
WHOOOPP
WHOOOOOOOOOOP
YA LUCKY, FRANK CASTLE.
YA LUCKY.
"WELL, I MUST TELL YOU, I FIND THIS ALL VERY FRUSTRATING."

AND I'M TELLIN' YA, THIS IS JUST LIKE HIM.
THIS @#$@# IS EXACTLY WHAT DIAMONDBACK WAS LIKE BACK IN THE DAY.
WHERE'S HE BEEN ALL THIS TIME?
WHERE IS HE NOW?
HE'S HURT AND ON THE RUN. HE'LL HEAD TO A SAFE HOUSE.
HE'LL ALSO WANT TO BE SEEN AROUND HARLEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO PROVE TO WHOEVER CARES THAT HE'S FINE, WHETHER HE IS FINE OR NOT.
SEE? THAT IS WHY I'D BE A TERRIBLE KINGPIN.
AW, BABY, THAT AIN'T TRUE.
THANKS, SWEETIE, BUT YOU HAVE TO SAY THAT.
NAW, JESS, I REALLY THINK YOU'D MAKE A BADASS KINGPIN--
MY POINT IS, DIAMONDBACK WILL SHOW HIS FACE, AND WE'LL BE THERE WHEN HE DOES.
WELL, I AM A DETECTIVE, AND YOU CAN SMELL THE AIR OR SOMETHING.
WE'LL FIND HIM.
THIS COULD BE OVER TONIGHT.
WE HAVE HIM ON THE ROPES.
YOU KNOW, YOU MAKE A LOT OF BOXING REFERENCES.
OH, UH, IS THAT A BOXING REFERENCE?
ARE YOU REALLY A FAMOUS BOXER? NAMED GARY?
GARY?
LUKE THINKS YOUR REAL NAME IS GARY.

THIS ISN'T A DATE, BY THE WAY.
WELL, THE NIGHT AIN'T OVER YET.
HA!
LISTEN, WHEN WE TALK TO HER, LET ME DO THE TALKING.
WHO IS "HER"?


WHO IS THIS WE'RE SEEIN'?
HER NAME IS RAINDROP LILLY.
I HATE HER ALREADY.
SHE'S NOT A FAN OF YOURS EITHER.
HOW DO YOU KNOW?

SHE ONCE SAID, "I'M NOT A FAN OF YOUR HUSBAND."
I THINK, IN THIS CASE, SHE MEANT YOU, SPECIFICALLY.
STILL DON'T KNOW WHO WE'RE TALKING ABOUT.

TELL ME HOW TO CONJURE A--
OH, HEY, HELLSTROM.

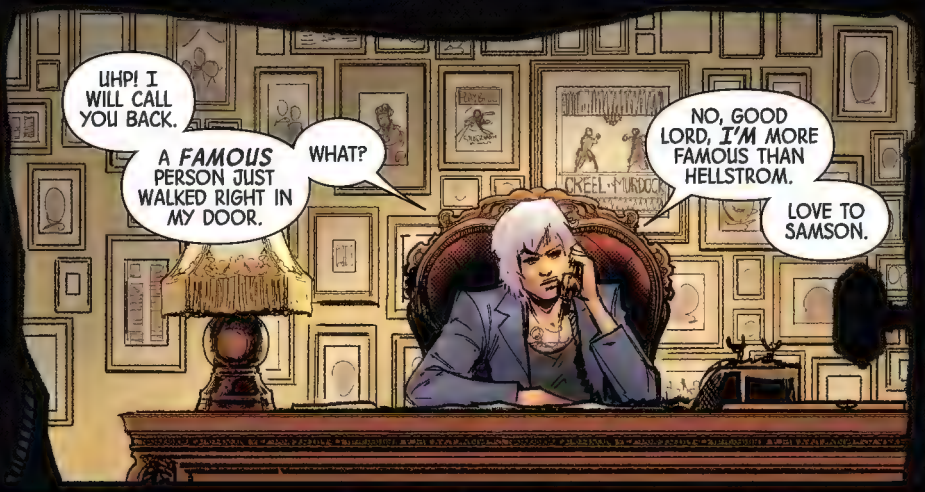
JESSICA JONES.
LONG TIME.
THAT'S WHAT YOU SAY? "LONG TIME"?
HEY, DAIMON...
IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME.

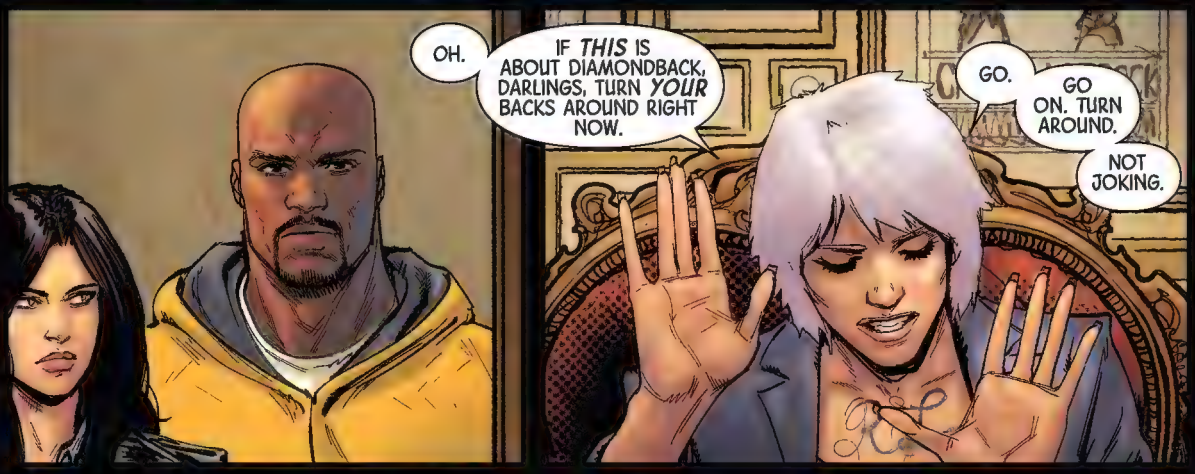
HSSS!!!

WHAT WAS THAT?
UGH!
I DATED BEFORE YOU.
YOU SHOULD TALK: SHE-HULK.

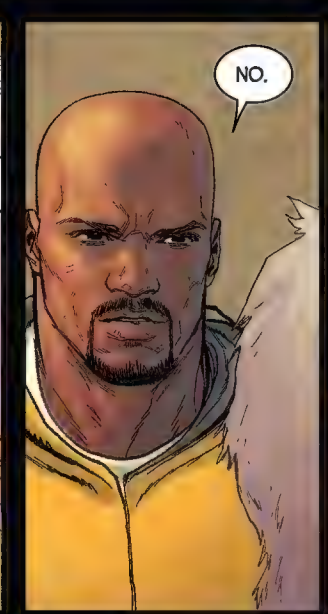
THAT WAS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.
AS OPPOSED TO WHEN?
I'LL DO THE TALKING.
THAT WAS SOLID.
BUT WE HAVE TO GET IN AND OUT OF HERE AND SHE'S NOT MADE THAT WAY.

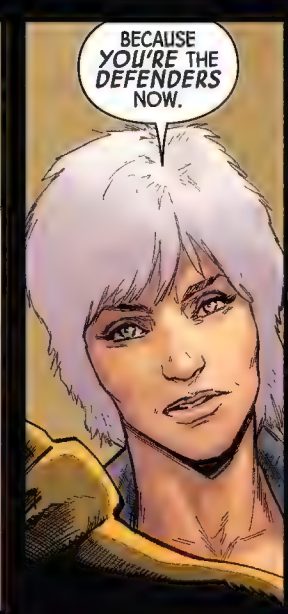
KNOCK KNOCK, RAINDROP.

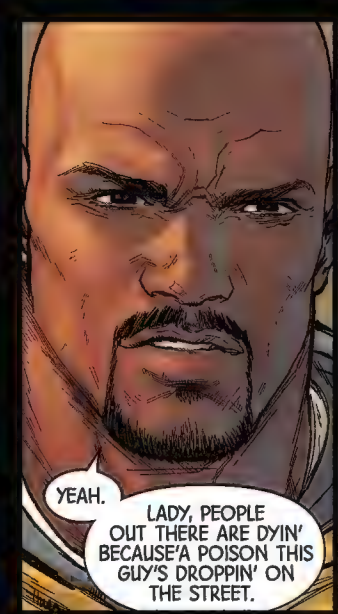

UHP! I WILL CALL YOU BACK.
A FAMOUS PERSON JUST WALKED RIGHT IN MY DOOR.
WHAT?
NO, GOOD LORD, I'M MORE FAMOUS THAN HELLSTROM.
LOVE TO SAMSON.

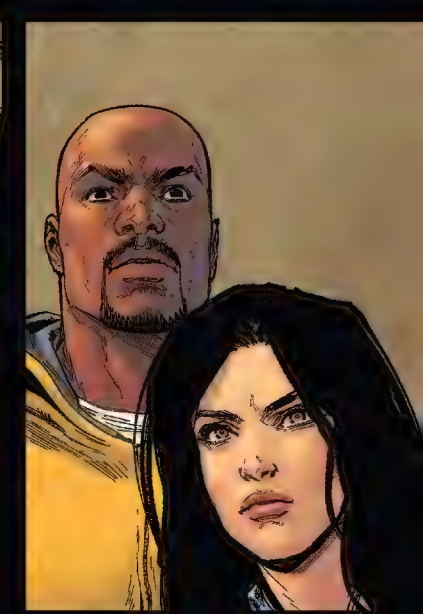

OH.
IF THIS IS ABOUT DIAMONDBACK, DARLINGS, TURN YOUR BACKS AROUND RIGHT NOW.
GO.
GO ON. TURN AROUND.
NOT JOKING.

LUKE, *RAINDROP LILLY.*
RAINDROP LILLY, *LUKE CAGE.*
DO WE KNOW EACH OTHER?
(LORD.)
DO PEOPLE *NOT* KNOW THAT QUESTION IS INSULTING EITHER WAY YOU ASK IT?





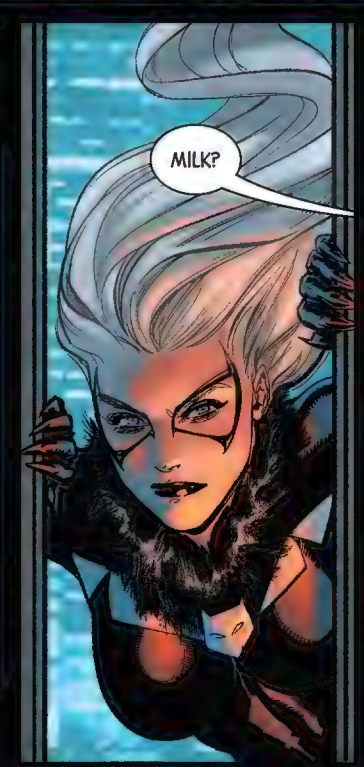


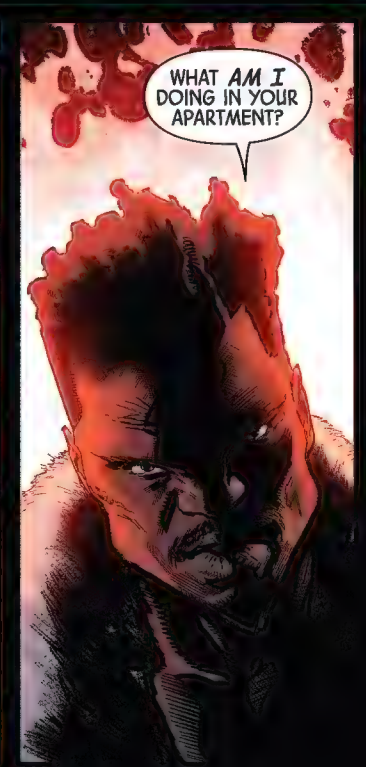


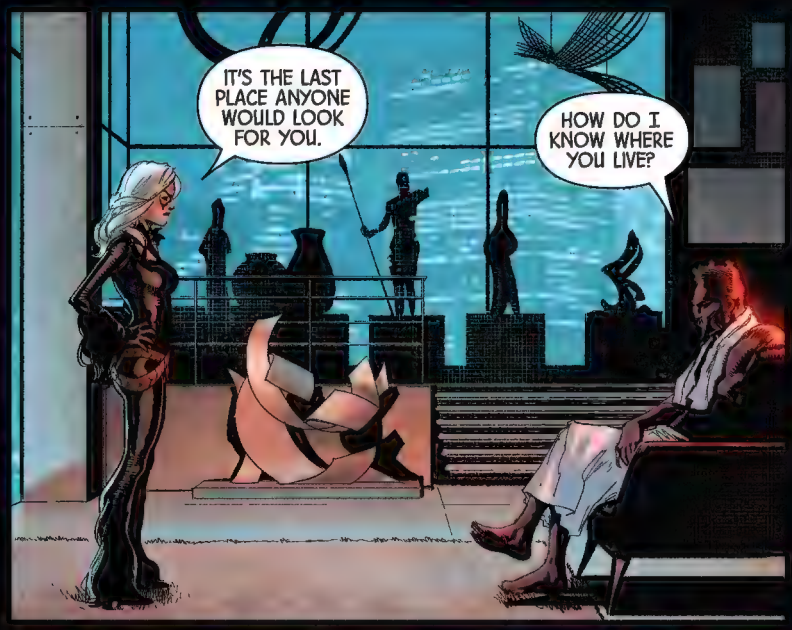
SORRY ABOUT YOUR LOCAL OFFICE.
THAT'S HAPPENED TO ME.
IT'S DEPRESSING AS HELL.
THANKS, GARY.
MY NAME'S NOT GARY.
ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU WOULD SAY IF YOUR NAME REALLY WAS GARY?
YES.
WHY DO YOU WEAR THE MASK?
YOU'RE ACTUALLY WEARING A MASK.
RIGHT NOW.
THIS IS PART OF THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE IMMORTAL IRON FIST.
THIS IS A PART OF A LEGACY UNIFORM.
GREAT.
WHY DO YOU WEAR THAT?
BECAUSE I WANT TO SCARE EVERY ONE OF THESE PARASITES TO THE DEEP BOTTOM OF THEIR SOULS.
AND I JUST CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT THE MASK.
TOO FAMOUS?
TOO HANDSOME.
SAMESIES.
THE MASK WORKS.
IT MEANS SOMETHING TO ME.
AND IT KEEPS MY LOVED ONES SAFE FROM, YOU KNOW...
THAT'S FAIR.
NOW DO THE THING YOU WANTED TO DO.
I WANTED TO SEE IF THERE WAS ANY LEFTOVER ENERGY RESIDUE, OR ANYTHING ELSE FROM THE MISSILE THAT HIT YOUR OFFICE, THAT I COULD TAKE BACK TO--OH.

ELEKTRA NATCHIOS.
WHO?
WHY WAS ELEKTRA NATCHIOS HERE?
WHO IS *THAT?*
ELEKTRA! THE ASSASSIN.
OH, *THAT* ELEKTRA.
SHE TRASHED OUR OFFICE?
SHE'S BEEN IN *HERE.*
RECENTLY.
WITHIN THE LAST HOUR.
HUH.

FELICIA?
HEY, HAMMER.
SORRY, I GOT NOTHIN'.
DIAMONDBACK LEFT TOWN.






IT'S THE LAST PLACE ANYONE WOULD LOOK FOR YOU.
HOW DO I KNOW WHERE YOU LIVE?

NO ONE EVER ACCUSED YOU OF BEING STUPID, WILLIS.

UH-HUH.
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT IT.
THIS CAN'T CONTINUE--THIS THING WITH ME AND YOU.

I AGREE.
LET'S HAVE NO MORE *ANYTHING* BETWEEN US.
NOTHING WOULD MAKE ME HAPPIER.

KINGPIN AIN'T A CO-TITLE.

YES!
THANK YOU.

SEE, YER ACTIN' LIKE IT'S *YOU*...

OKAY. LET'S TAKE A STEP BACK...
...LET'S HAVE SOME OPTICS.
YOU ARE ON THE RUN FROM THE COPS AND HOLED UP HERE NAKED IN MY LIVING ROOM.
I AM NONE OF THOSE THINGS.

POP

POP
POP
POP

POP
GUYS I KNOW SAID YOU WAS AN INHUMAN OR SOMETHIN'...
WHAT?
CALL LUKE AND JESSICA.
POP
I DON'T KNOW. SHE HAS NEVER ACTED LIKE THAT BEFORE.
TEEDLE TEEDLE DEE-
@#$@#$.
...KNEW YOU WERE NOTHIN'.
POP
POP
POP
TO BE CONTINUED...

Good thing cats have nine lives, amirite? Am I? Seriously, am I correct? Does that apply to human people who like to wear a lot of fur? I don't actually know. Anyway, welcome back to the letters page, DEFENDERS readers! Assistant Editor Alanna Smith here to tackle all your pressing questions about the fine publication you hold in your hands.

If you have thoughts you'd like to see printed on this still not-quite-named letters page, email us at MHEROES@MARVEL.COM and mark your letter "Okay to Print." Or, if you'd rather be IN THE NOW, you can tweet us using the hashtags #DefendersComic and #OkToPrint to see your Tweet printed on the Next Issue page.

Now, on to those letters!

What's up, guys?
Getting the gang back together after CIVIL WAR II was awesome to see. I want to first mention how awesome the art is. Marquez and Ponsor are a fantastic collaboration. The art is dynamic and adds value to the story. Bendis is really showing off with this story. In one comic, he has hooked me for an entire series. You guys are going to BLOW THIS OUT OF THE WATER!

Keep it up, guys,
A. Roche

Hey A.! This team sure can put a pretty book together, huh? Wait 'til you see the crazy sequence they're pulling together for #6--it will BLOW YOUR MIND.

A suggestion for the DEFENDERS letters page title: Public Defenders.

John Wilkey

Hm...I'm not ready to put a ring on it just yet, John, but we'll keep it in the mix!

Wow, loved DEFENDERS #1. It was Defendtastic. This really gets me excited for the next issue and for the Defenders Netflix show. Great writing and awesome art.

Shane Detert

I'm *answering* these while waiting to watch a screening of *Defenders* tonight and I'm climbing the walls waiting for it--glad the book's made you excited and not just SUPER IMPATIENT like me! I'M SO AMPED.

Hi.

I just finished reading DEFENDERS #4 and I couldn't overlook that Alanna is looking for a name for the letters page.

I've been digging deep inside my mind and I think I came with something that might be considerable, at best. So, what about DEFENDIN' DELIVERY? You can thank me later. By the way, the Defenders rock!

From Michal Vamos,
Czech Republic

Now I've got images in my head of the Defenders aggressively protecting mailmen and I love it a little bit.

DEFENDERS has been great so far! As for a letters page name, how about "De Senders"?

Lex Pendragon

I think the De Senders are the archnemeses of the mailman-protecting Defenders--making sure that mail will NEVER REACH ITS DESTINATION.

Brian M. Bendis,

When you say Diamondback is back, and nobody confuses him (a villain even I've never heard of or read before) with the Captain America Diamondback GF--unrealistic! How did Jessica Jones, for one, even know anything about Diamondback, who's supposedly been dead for years? She's been reading Luke's "great big book of dead former villains"? And this team acted like a team before they even talked about being a team! In fact, they still haven't really chosen a name. But I guess it helps that Luke, Iron Fist and maybe Daredevil have a little bit of history with the OG Defenders...Black Cat, too; maybe she'll turn on Diamondback next issue, help Luke join the D team? I don't think it was ever covered exactly why BC even became a villain again?

But you know me, right? You gotta sift through the negative to get to the positive! And there were positives here. Luke and Jess are probably back together again! DD is on the team he should've always been on! The D-listers have a new mission statement!

Much needed! And hey, don't be shy about admitting new members; these four can always be the core team, right? Great cover. This all may be just what the Defenders need.

Cheers,
Andrew J. Shaw

Actually, Andrew, Matt Murdock STILL thinks everyone's talking about the Diamondback who dated Captain America, and is wondering when her voice got so low and gravelly.

OMG!!! Just read THE DEFENDERS #4 and it was off the hook!!! This just keeps getting better and better by the page! This artwork alone is so incredible. Major props to Bendis, Marquez and Ponsor for their astounding work! Can't wait to see the dankness of issue #5 next month! You have a major supporting fan in St. Louis!

Otis McClure

Otis!!! Did issue #5 live up to your expectations? I must know! I MUST KNOW!

Hey Alanna,

The wait was worth it. Bendis back on Daredevil, my favorite Marvel character, in the coolest streetwise super hero team in Hell's Kitchen. What more could we want?

This is such a top creative team--Bendis, Marquez, Ponsor and Petit--that they can even pull off cheesy scenes, like the 4-panel, in-your-face center spread, with aplomb. Their passion shines throughout the comic and on into the extra-value back matter. I love these little Bendis touches; an in-depth Ben Urich interview with Luke Cage peppered with fantastic pin-ups from Luke's checkered past. My faves were Jason Latour's "Be a True Power Man" and the fabulous '70s Jim Brown Hero for Hire look by the late-greats Cockrum & Buckler & the not-so-late Mounts. I hope you can keep these extra surprises coming in the back pages.

I thought I was reading the wrap-up of the Diamondback arc but the To Be Continued... and Stryker sharing a prison-bound truck with the Punisher...and Elektra lurking on rooftops...means this storyline ain't done yet. I'm enjoying the ride.

Prospective letters page titles:
Fess up with Jess
Puke on Luke
Chat with Matt
Defenestrating with the Defenders
or how about Defenders of the Faith?

Cheers,
Bruce Marsh
Newbury Park
England

Thanks for the nice words, Bruce! But between "Defenestrating with the Defenders" and "Puke on Luke," I worry you're expecting a very different kind of letter column!

"Defend This!"

Love,
Danny O'Cadiz
Denver, CO

Between the confrontational letters page suggestion and the affectionate sign off, this short letter was quite a roller coaster, Danny!

That's all we've got room for this time! Keep sending in your letters page suggestions, and come back next month for more daring defending!

-Honorary Defender Alanna Smith

NEXT!

@mjperljam
The Pulse Luke Cage interview in DEFENDERS #1 was brilliant - a unique way to delve into a comic book character. #Defenderscomic

@durinfunerals
Bendis' #Defenderscomic is destroying me right now. Danny & Jessica kicking all kinds of ass, plus the neverending team banter!

@Skyward_Link
on the edge of my seat; amazing use of colors in each page #Defenderscomic

@ImmaNightwing
#Defenderscomic is a great creative team at their very best! Every issue is an absolute treasure to behold.

@bruso_tyler
#Defenderscomic continues to excellent. Brilliant storytelling from both the writing and art. Looking forward to more.

@jasonreyes00
The Punisher trying to get free from Cage's grip is the funniest thing I have read in a comic in a long while. #Defenderscomic

@Man_of_Feelz
I am finally reading #Defenderscomic, and what a great start! The art is beautiful and these street heroes have great chemistry!

DEFENDERS #6

ALL ON SALE THIS MONTH!

LUKE CAGE #5

JESSICA JONES #12

DAREDEVIL #26

IRON FIST #7

We want to hear from you! Send your letters to MHEROES@MARVEL.COM marked "OKAY TO PRINT," or tweet us using the hashtags #DefendersComic and #OKtoprint for a chance to see your tweet printed in future issues!